

**The International Morse Preservation Society
and
FISTS C.W. CLUB**

_____ de G3ZQS

_____ 1997

Dear _____,

You have been sponsored for membership of the above club and it is my great pleasure to enclose herewith the membership application form.

There has long been a demand for an organizations such as this not only to fill the void left by the declining numbers of ex-professional operators but to nurture the interests of those who are drawn to the mode but lack the operating skills. It's just these Amateurs who would otherwise be tempted to exchange the key for a microphone if the satisfactions and pleasure of Morse were to be denied them by a lack of opportunity. Such opportunity is rare when one is a beginner and the bands appear to be populated by c.w. signals which are well beyond their limited skills.

FISTS is peopled by those whose love of Morse has urged them on to encourage the beginner, to dispel those initial moments of fear and help them reach out for a joy known only to a small minority of Radio Amateurs.

A love of MORSE and a concern for its perpetuation are the only requisites for membership. There is no specific speed requirement and neither is membership of the RSGB or other National body demanded. The aims of the club are:

- a) To further the use of Morse Code on the bands
- b) To encourage the newcomer to the mode
- c) To engender friendships within the membership

You will appreciate that in order to effect these goals, the club must render itself open to the novice operator and have a healthy sprinkling of Veterans to encourage them.

Your subs are due on the anniversary of the month in which you joined. There will be approximately 12 newsletters per year which will depend largely on your own contributions and you are encouraged to offer comments and observations.

We have our own QSL bureau which distributes members cards free as far as is possible and members may also chose to adopt the club QSL card.

In addition, we have a talking newsletter for those who are visually handicapped.

One of the greatest spin-offs of a club of this nature is the firm and lasting friendships which are a direct result of membership and consequent on-air contacts. You are encouraged not only to meet other members on the air but, if the opportunity is there, on a Social basis also. Should you wish to invite your current friends to join the club, you are at liberty to nominate them bearing in mind the criteria mentioned above.

We look forward to receiving your reply.

73 de

Yeo

G3ZQS

FISTS C.W. Club

Membership Application Form

Callsign _____ Name on the Air _____

Mailing Name and Address:

The following info provides a synopsis of members' working conditions:

Rig(s) _____

Antennas _____

Other club affiliations (ARRL, RSGB, etc) _____

Other interests _____

Birthdate _____ Phone _____

Are you visually handicapped? _____

Email address (if applicable) _____

Packet address (if applicable) _____

Date _____ Your sponsor (if applicable) _____

Signature _____

Please enclose annual subs of \$15 (U.S. funds)

Please make checks payable to FISTS CW club and return to:
Nancy Kott WZ8C, POB 47, Hadley MI 48440-0047 USA



KEY NOTE



Sec: E. (Geo) Longden, G3ZQS, 119 Cemetery Rd., DARWEN, Lancs. BB3 2LZ, England. 0254 703948

Slow Traffic Net: Tuesday/ Thursday 9pm EDT on 3.682 Net Control op varies. **Slow Ragchewing Group:** W8BI 8pm EDT Wed on 3.720

Century Award Net: Sunday 2000Z on 14.058MHz (KE3NV/W4JTU N CS)

Saturday QSO Groups: 14.058 at 2000Z (WP2T) and 7.058 at 2300Z

Please keep watch on the Novice Bands and frequencies ending in .x58 (.058, .158, .258 etc) and 3.720 kHz

North American Memo

by Nancy Kott WZ8C

PO Box 47 Hadley MI 48440-0047

email: nancy@tir.com

phone: 810-797-5388

Articles from The Keynote may be reprinted if credit is given to the original author.

New FISTS Logo Rubber Stamp

We have a new item in our FISTS supply store.

It's a logo stamper that makes a logo exactly like the ones on the front of this KeyNote. It's not self-inking, which means you can get different colors of ink pads and choose whatever colors fit your fancy! We don't sell the ink pads, but you can get your stamper for \$5, postpaid first class, from Irene WO8E, 25206 Hayes, Roseville MI 48066. Thanks to Bob W3CW for doing all the legwork and research on this project!

Hello FISTS!

The most important issue we have to deal with this month: The ARRL is seeking comments on Licensing Structure. I'm sure you have all read their suggestions for proposing changes, including eliminating the Novice class, eliminating handicap waivers and eliminating the Morse code multiple-guess exam, so I won't go into the details here. It's published in QST, so you can refer back to that for the details.

The part that concerns me the most is their suggested change of giving up part of our CW-only frequencies to include SSB. Please look this over carefully and write your comments to the ARRL. I hope you will write a polite letter to the ARRL to let them know we need and use our CW frequencies and it is important to keep them.

The ARRL haven't made a proposal yet. They are trying to gather input, so this is the chance to be heard and influence the outcome of the way ham radio will be in the future.

Don't fool yourself into thinking that your letter and comments don't count - they REALLY do. Be sure to add on your letter that you are a FISTS CW Club member - our numbers are in the 3100 range now, so we are getting to be a force to be reckoned with!

If I keep my rambling on this first page short, I should be able to keep the KeyNote down to 20 pages this month! So...On with your Keynote ---

THIS MONTH'S PHOTOPAGE WINNER IS

***** N9RFR...Don #2462 *****

To get your name put in the drawing (actually a computer-random selection), you must have your photo in the photopages, or have sent in a photo which is being processed. Any snapshot is suitable if your face appears about the size of the faces you see on the photopages. All participants are eligible each month, but you can only win once.

SEND IT NOW! Next month's drawing may be your lucky draw. Your chance of winning a FISTS PATCH AND 50 GOLD FISTS STICKERS is excellent. Why not be a winner? Send photo to W8ROG, 25206 Hayes, Roseville MI 48066.

Civil War Buffs Needed

I received a letter from Dave Harbin KC8AUT of the Second Regiment Infantry - Michigan Volunteers Reactivated. They are a living history group whose activities center on the Civil War period. There are adding telegraphy to their demonstrations and have 2 sounders and keys donated by FISTS member Ralph W8LHG. They are looking for info to help portray telegraphy during this period. If you can offer advice, please contact Dave at PO Box 221, Genesee MI, 48437 or email at secondmich@aol.com. They have a web page - <http://members.aol.com/secondmich/page1.htm>

SPRING SPRINT

The second weekend in May is the Spring Sprint. It gets bigger and better each year, this year should be no exception. Scoring and rules will be printed in full in next month's Keynote, as well as QST, World Radio and CQ magazine.

HOW DO I...?

..ORDER CLUB SUPPLIES? Irene WO8E 25206 Hayes, Roseville MI 48066 has gold logo stickers, 200 for \$5; blue enamel/gold metal clasp-back logo pins \$3.50; cloth logo patches 3" octagon shaped \$1.50, rubber stamps with the FISTS CW CLUB logo as it appears on the masthead for \$5. Please make checks out to FISTS, these prices do include first class postage.

FISTS coffee mugs are available from Joe Falcone 9614 Arden Ave, Livonia MI 48150 for \$3.50 plus \$3 postage - make mug checks payable to Joe Falcone.

...GET AN UP-TO-DATE MEMBERLIST?

Send a SASE with TWO additional loose stamps to Ed N7CFA 2628 Lilac Street, Longview WA 98632.

...Get on the FISTS On-Line Email List?

Send your Email address to Brian W8BL at his new Email address: blafont@tir.com

...GET/SEND FISTS QSL CARDS Via BURO? Brian W8BL 3050 Rochester Rd, Dryden MI 48428 handles the Buro. Save postage money! Put your QSLs to other FIST members (both NA and DX) in order by call area, alphabetically, & mail them to Brian for delivery. To get cards you may have waiting, send loose stamps to Brian and he'll use them to send your cards to you as they come in.

...RENEW MY KEYNOTE SUBSCRIPTION? Send a check/money order made out to FISTS for \$15/year to Nancy WZ8C POBox 47 Hadley MI 48440

...HAVE APPS/SAMPLES SENT TO FRIENDS? Send their address, along with a couple loose stamps to help hold down expenses, to Joe K5HLR 29 Melrose Dr, Marroero LA, 70072. Or reach Joe via Email at jpardue@jep.com.

...APPLY FOR THE CENTURY AWARD?

Send a list of contacts to Lee N9NVV 4530 N 15th Street Terre Haute IN 47805 - Don't submit QSLs

...VOLUNTEER FOR or GET A CODE BUDDY?

Ed WA3WSJ 775 Moonflower Reading PA 19606

...SHARE COMPUTER SOFTWARE?

Joe WZ8U 5428 Bolander Grand Blanc MI 48439

...GET MY PHOTO ON THE PHOTOPAGES? Send a snapshot of yourself to Ken W8ROG 25206 Hayes, Roseville MI 48066.

...FIND THE WEB PAGE?

<http://n9nvv.qrp.com/~fists>

...SUGGEST IDEAS FOR THE WEB PAGE?

Contact Bill KK4KF at bjmyers@arc.net

...IMPROVE MY CODE SPEED and MEET LOTS OF NEW FRIENDS? Join FISTS! Get involved in the nets and activities! Volunteer to be a Code Buddy! Write an article for the Keynote about your interests!

CORRECTIONS

There is a major goof on Photopage 9 that went out in the last Keynote. Claire AC6QO sent in a photo of her and her OM, and W8ROG assumed that the FISTS in the photo was the OM! I didn't notice it until after it was printed, regrettably. We're hoping Claire can find another photo so we can get it right. Sorry Claire!

DAYTON Get -Together

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the FISTS Third Annual Informal EyeBall QSO Party on Friday night May 16. It's on the top floor of the Crowne Plaza Hotel, in Downtown Dayton.

Vince KG8WF wants to talk with other FISTS who are camping during Dayton weekend. He writes "The Knights of the Old Code are coming to Dayton, camping, and will have a CW station on the air of course! We are looking for FISTS who enjoy camping, food and those old stories hams tell each other by the fire. I called camping grounds in the area, and they said 'no reservations, first come - first served'. If you are interested let me know. You can write to me or find me on 7.142 in the morning or on the Freedom net starting at 7pm on 28.420 Sunday nights. Let's figure out a plan. It sure would be nice to put a bunch of CW ops in a camping ground. The airwaves will never be the same!! Vince Festa KG8WF, 9498 Waite Dr, Fenton MI, 48430

ILLINOIS License Plates

John WB9CIS sends along the info that Illinois has a special license plate commemorating Field Day. It has a graphic of a key, a mic, the ARRL logo, a beam antenna and CQ spelled out in CW with the words "Ham Radio Field Day June 28 and 29, 1997" on it! How about that! John applied for his plate, but was told it wouldn't be sent until late April. The plate itself is silver with the serial number in blue, the ARRL logo in black and the ham graphics in red. Sounds pretty snazzy! A collectible for sure for the lucky hams in IL.

Callsign changes

Jason AB5LX is now N5NU Bill N2WNR is now K2WP
Virgil KG9HB is now K9AI Jose WP4IIV is now KP3W
Dick KF4EVM is now KU4AV Jay N2TTL is now W3AN
Biff KE4USV is now K4LAW Greg N9ROR is now N9WC
Ronald AE4LQ is now K4WZ Carl KA5DAV is now N5XE
Bob AA9SY is now N9ZLA Harvey KI7EG is now K7VZ
Pat K5ETX is now K5AO
Marty KC5OZS is now KM5FD
Ed KB2QWO is now N2ED
David K8LUX is now K8UX
Greg AA9DK is now K9GC

For Sale CW Lover's Delight

Kenwood TS-830S with external VFO-230 (digital). Radio has cascaded International Radio 400Hz filters, new driver and finals (less than 25 hours use) \$825.00 includes shipping and MC-50 microphone. Will deliver to Dayton.

Pete, NN9K (309) 792-0232 or nn9k@worldnet.att.net.

SILENT KEY

I am very sorry to have to tell you that Marion Williamson AC5CM, FISTS # 1761, passed away last month. Lea AB5TY, got the news from a church member who found Lea's number among Marion's papers. Marion was only 53 years old and was one of the most remarkable, hard working women I've known. She and I emailed frequently and were able to make contact on the air a few times. I hadn't heard from her in a couple months, but I just assumed that she was going thru a busy time with her farm.

Marion had reclaimed an overgrazed Texas prairie and built it into a goat ranch by reworking the soil and planting grasses. I was amazed she could do all that work by herself, and always amused by the tales of her goats. She loved those goats and would always end her letters with Baaaah from the goat lady!

She also found the time to check into traffic nets and write computer programs. At the time she passed away, she was writing a program for a computer game to help make improving your CW more fun. I'm going to miss her, but I'm very glad I had a chance to get to know her.

What is CW?

This was sent to us by Greg K9GC It is by N1CNS, written as a reminder that CW is a serious and viable means of communication. CW is:

It is a unique, intimate, concise and effective communication skill still employed throughout the world.

It is the most efficient mode in terms of power required for long-distance communication, least susceptible to interference, and most conserving of the radio frequency spectrum.

It involves no accent or pronunciation problems, providing a widely understood international language.

It employs simpler, more reliable and easily maintained equipment than any other communications mode.

It is an equalizer, negating age, speech impediments and dialectal differences; it provides for ready acceptance of youngsters in an adult environment.

It is the ONLY radio communications mode that is understood readily by both man and machine.

FOR SALE

TS 520S with filter and manual in Excellent Condition, and a MC50 microphone also in EC.

Radio --- \$320.00 plus shipping

Mike ---- \$35.00 plus shipping,

or both for \$340 plus shipping. Contact Al Krebs KC8BSC FISTS #2069, 2299 Winter Prky #269, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221. Phone: 330-940-2197

A Fast ride through Interstate 95

by Hector E. Perez

Enjoying CW is fun. It provides us with a sense of mixed feelings. Enhances self esteem of it's users, gives you a sense of fellowship, security, pride and of course, helps it's users 'protect the species'. CW is what I call The Real McCoy.

CW is there to enjoy at its full extent; but sometimes however it might also be as painful as a "fast ride through interstate 95" when someone drags you out of the chair at an extreme high speed you cannot follow. You might sit there in your shack trying or pretending to "debut" what the other ham is telling at his fast speed. You may even pick up some words like the usual RST, name, QTH, but other facts in the QSO which are also important, are missed.

While contesting, worrying about speed is no big deal; in fact, if you are a contender, I urge you to speed up. A 599/4 and "k" - good enough but when it comes to ragchewing, then the story is different. Here is where you test yourself real good and proper speed is needed.

I have been around CW ever since I became a ham almost 10 years ago and I have always kept my speed on low profile for the above reason; 10-13 wpm. I feel this is a good speed to work with and enjoy a good rag chewing QSO with anyone. Sometimes as I said before, someone gets in and drags me at high speed which I honestly say I cannot follow. I try the courtesy and at some instances ask the fellow to please slow down a little. I have a handicap and due to head surgery, I have a hearing impairment on my left side. Such impairment is not an obstacle to copy at 10-13 WPM, but; high speed with me...hurts.

If it happens that you know the other guy and your speed is his, well, you can go ahead and keep on running the "Interstate 95", but for sure, that will impede some other slow speed operators on trying to catch your station and making a new FISTS number.

FISTS Club motto of Accuracy Before Speed speaks by itself; so, lets keep our speed on CW to a fair level. If not, buckle up. 73 de NP4FW #2531

QRG??? QRG means FREQUENCY. For example: QRG 14.058 - my exact frequency is 14.058

Cowlitz March Madness Report

by Ed N7CFA

Our March Morse Madness went pretty well today, however band conditions here were just awful. Big storms from the Pacific causing 10 over QRN much of the time. QRN was 10 over sometimes when the sigs were only S3. We did manage some contacts on 15, 20 and 40 and people had lots of fun. We had 9 FISTS and 5 non-FISTS up at the club. Our new filters allowed us on any band without interference. The newer hams are ready to "do it again".

We were slow getting started and Jack, WB2FXK, gave us a wake-up call at 1805z. You can depend on that guy being there any time. Stu was next from CA, then he was also our first on 40 meters.

Welcome to the New FISTS

Another remarkable month for new FISTS!! Thanks to all who are recommending FISTS to your friends, and signing up your family members - isn't this great - look at this list!

3103 Howie AA7XQ in Brookings OR (AC6QO)
3102 Marion KB7PAD in Brookings OR (AC6QO)
3101 Al KC8EPA in Ashtabula OH (AA9LS)
3100 Jeff VA3JEF in Markham Ontario
3099 Ron WA1UWZ in W Brookfield MA (KB2ZSF)
3098 Michael WA2OCG in Kent WA (WB2FXK)
3097 Frances K7ACK in Shelton WA (W7UDZ)
3096 Keith KC5YBA in Springdale AR (KC5DUI)
3095 Vicky KC5SOC in Springdale AR (KC5DUI)
3094 Jim K4CMH in Wendell NC (WB2FXK)
3093 Melody KC7SIB in St George UT (W8EQA)
3092 Duncan VE3GXU in Ottawa Ontario (WB2FXK)
3091 Craig WB8TLC in Powell OH (XE1/KG8DA)
3090 George K4SSC in Albuquerque NM
3089 Kevin W6KN in Bishop CA (WA0FGV)
3088 John KF4AUM in Pensacola FL
3087 Ben KS4IE in Pensacola FL
3086 Ben N0SOT in Kansas City MO (N8NLE)
3085 Harry KC2AUH in Old Bridge NJ
3084 Lou W0QKR in Northglenn CO (K5HLR)
3083 Bill KC4UBC in Pensacola FL
3082 Orin N4ZMP in Pensacola FL (KE4HOS)
3081 Les K4HL in Pensacola FL (KS4IE)
3080 Leo W5KRP in Thibodaux LA (AA2YH)
3079 Bob KF4JRO in Sarasota FL (WB2FXK)
3078 Herb WR4A in Madison AL (AA2YH)
3077 USS Pamanito (submarine) NJ6VT (K6DF)
3076 Dennis K6DF in Fremont CA (KJ7OX)
3075 Howard KB8PAO in Cincinnati OH (K1SZK)
3074 Ernie KJ8E in Monaville WV
3073 Bill K0MP in Parker CO (AA0XI)
3072 Pam W0NF in Parker CO (AA0XI)
3071 Keith KB2PVC in Niagara Falls NY
3070 Dennis KC7RKR in Phoenix AZ (G3ZQS)
3069 Ken K5GAT in Naples TX (N2VWD)
3068 Bob N1YLA in Morrisville VT (K5HLR)
3067 Dick KS0M in Fulton MO
3066 Clinton VE7ALL in Vanderhook BC, CANADA
3065 Jeremy KB8LEA in Doylestown OH
3064 Gary WN9U in Whitefish Bay WI (N3XJQ)
3063 Jim N9LEC in Mounds IL (N9NVV)
3062 John N8WPX in Parma OH (KA5QYR)
3061 Frank KB9KGI in Plymouth IN (WD8BSG)
3060 Mick KF8AK in Ashtabula OH (K8OUA)
3059 Ken KI5SP in Jourdanton TX (K5HLR)
3058 Bob W3SYR in White Oak PA (NY2V)
3057 John KB6VBL in Petaluma CA (W6DDB)
3056 Bob AA8YO in Dearborn MI (KA1RVV)
3055 Chris KD6HTV in Fresno CA (K5HLR)
3054 Fritz KA9GXZ in Monroe WI (W7BWI)
3053 Jerry KG8ZQ in Centerville OH (WA0FAX)
3052 Gene W0GZ in New London MO
3051 Clyde K9JWI in Lafayette IN (WB2FXK)
3050 Rich KC5VYE in Morrilton AR (KT4YY)

3049 David VE3TIJ in Ajax Ontario CAN (K5HLR)
3048 Gene KA2FDA in Lockport NY (KA1RVV)
3047 Roy KC8CHR in Waterford MI (K3DC)
3046 Bob N7KX in Hamilton MT (K5HLR)
3045 Nick KE4VOQ in Manassas VA (K1SZK)
3044 Jay WA5WHN in Albuquerque NM (K5FO)
3043 Parker WD8JOL in Springfield OH (K2VT)
3042 Scott KM5AV in Shreveport LA (K5APB)
3041 Nathan KC5VLF in Austin TX (KC5VJU)
3040 Woody KF9EI in Thornton IL (WA2TWS)
3039 Esther KB8TMR in Cuyahoga Falls OH (KD1XA)
3038 Ed KC7SSN in Battle Ground VA (AB7QG)
3037 Bernie WB6KUG in Fresno CA (AC6TO)
3036 Linea Burke (no call yet) in CT (KA1ZQR)
3035 Doug Jones in Santa Rosa CA (WL7SF)
3034 Rob WD4JCB in Miami Florida (WP2T)
3033 Trevor VE3BMC/VE7BKC in Ontario (VA3LK)
3032 Bill K8FLY in N. Muskegon MI (KE4HOS)
3031 Skip W3VQY in Linthicum ND (WK3P)
3030 George VE3MMO/G0TUA in ONT/England (W4HZD)
3029 Lois N3YIW in Lititz PA (K5HLR)
3028 Bill N3WST in Lititz PA (K5HLR)
3027 Alan N5LF in Austin Texas (W7UDZ)
3026 Toy K6GVG in Newport Beach CA (KE4QZB)
3025 VE3MIQ Bill in Ontario Canada
3024 George K2IVG in Haledon NJ (WD8OCV)
3023 Rick KB0TCY in St Louis MO (N2NY)
3022 Dave KB6ZKB in Ontario CA (K7FQ)
3021 Gary WA0EAF in Marquette Kansas
3020 Paul N8LUX in Fremont IN (WD9DSP)
3019 Chuck KE4OAR in Philadelphia TN (K3DC)
3018 Forest WA8ZED in Lake Placid FL
3017 George KD7ABK in Eugene OR (N1VWD)
3016 Hank N8HG in Harrison MI (AF9H)
3015 Marty NR3Z in Lansdale PA
3014 Ken NE0C in Flushing Ohio (WB2FXK)
3013 Jim W4ZR in Lithonia GA (KD4GTM)
3012 Jim N0SHK in Elkland MO (KC5RFM)
3011 Ed W1WEA in Farmington CT (KA1RVV)
3010 Henry W5HNS in Pasadena Texas (W8LHG)
3009 Ron WA0JEN in Davenport Iowa (N2SLB)
3008 Clarence AB2BP in Lockport NY (WB2FXK)
3007 Jim KF4IYS in Chesapeake VA (N8NLE)
3006 Sonia N2PAX in Saratoga Spgs NY (KE4HOS)
3005 Michael (no call yet) in Wilmette IL (K5FO)
3004 Steve WB4NBI in Reston VA
3003 Jim W6OW in Coarsegold CA
3002 Jim W6UJX in Littlerock CA (W6DDB)
3001 Tom KB0WVO in Tonka Bay, MN (K3DC)
3000 Dave WD4EKB in Fulton NY (WP2T)
2999 Hack W8LUY in Princeton IL (WD8OCV)
2998 Bud KE6BAZ in Sylmar CA (KC7RHM)
2997 Bob K8JPM in Canal Fulton OH (W8IO)
2996 Tom K5AX in Santa Fe Texas (KN2GSJ)
2995 Phil K2PG in West Creek NJ (AC6QO)
2994 Sam KD4CDI in Moncks Corner SC (WAWEE)
2993 Neal AC4DT in Plantation FL (W8LFI)
2992 Frank KE8MM in Dearborn Hgts MI (N8WDH)
2991 Ed W8AFI in Garden City MI (N8WDH)
2990 Helene KC8ECG in Grand Blanc MI (K8MEG)

NET NEWS

There is always some confusion about the net times in regard to the time change that comes with Daylight Savings Time. I hope to have some "official" news from the Net Control Operators about the starting times of their nets after April 5th. Last year, the nets stayed with the same LOCAL time, if I remember right. If there are any changes, I'll put them on the net times on the masthead of the KeyNote. Net managers: Pse let me know the plans for your net times!

Wed. Slow Speed Group by Charlie KA8OQF

The Second Anniversary meeting on the air of the FISTS Slow Speed Group was held on 6 March 1997 and it was the biggest and longest net ever in the Group's history!!

14 stations checked in for almost 2 1/2 hours, from WV, Quebec, IL, TN, OH, MA, Ontario, MD, MI, IA, and KS. It was a big thrill - and as I told everyone at the end of the net, the success of the net overall has surpassed anything I could have imagined. Here's to a long run for FISTS on 3720 -- and hopefully someone on the Left Coast will accept the challenge and FISTS will establish itself in the 80m Novice Band as a permanent entity very soon!!

Century Award Net by Scott W3CW

3/2: (my birthday)W4JTU, WP2T, AA9KH, KF6DCU, VP2MH, W6LEE, KA4IFF, AA2YH KQ4VH, WK4CR, VY2RB Ended the net a little early so I could celebrate my Birthday with my family.

3/8: W4JTU, WA7YYY(Ed), AA9KH, WA0FAX, N5XE, N3PM, N2SV, KF2TP, W0FU, KB3AVS, KB5VTB, WA0FGV, AC4DT, AA3DU. Had 3 newcomers today, a big welcome to N5XE, W0FU and AC4DT. Lost Bert early into the net, had to carry on without his help.

3/16 Today's net was pretty poor. Conditions were beyond lousy, the following checked in: W4JTU, K2UXE, WA3WEE, WK3P, KK5ZN, N5XE, KP4DJ

I have finished my first year as NCS for the Century Award net. The first thing that I must say is that the net could not have been as successful as it was without the help of Bert, W4JTU. His fine CW skills and patience have pulled us out of a lot of jams. It has been a lot of fun helping Fists members meet each other, and get points toward their Century award. I look forward to another year and hope it will be even more successful than this one. I wish to thank each and everyone that took the time to check in to the net. You have all been a great help and many people are thankful for the points that you given them and for the new friendship that has started because of the contact. I hope to see all of you often. Please join in, give a few points, make some friends and help keep CW alive.

Here are the first year totals for the Century Award

Net. 46 nets were run, I lost the records for my first two, so the averages are for 44 nets. Six nets were not run because of contest activity. Total amount of check-ins (QNI) were 446. Total time on the net was 92.5 hours This averages to 10 QNI per week and 2.1 hours per net. There have been a total of 151 different people check in. 136 were North American and 15 were DX. The longest net was 3.75 hours and the shortest was 1 hour.

I have awards going out to the following Fists members for their support. Just a small token of thanks for supporting Fists, CW and the Century award Net. It is called the "Netster Award".

W4JTU 38 QNI, WA3WEE 24 QNI, N4VEF 22 QNI.

DX: G0MWU 8 QNI, GX0IPX 3 QNI, VP2MH 3 QNI Honorable mention: WP2T 17 QNI, AA3DU 16 QNI, KB3AVS 15 QNI W3ERU 11 QNI, AA9KH 10 QNI and KB5VTB 10 QNI and everyone else that took the time to stop in.

A friendly reminder to all who check into the Century Award Net on Sundays. This net is for making quick contacts to be used toward your Century Award. After everyone is QNI(checked in), I will proceed to go down the list in the order that I checked everyone in. When your turn comes around, you can call anyone on the list for a quick QSO. The exchange is RST, NAME, QTH, and Fists Number. Please keep it short, this gives everyone an equal chance to get a QSO before the band changes or drops out. Please think of the people after you on the list, they also want to make a few contacts :-)

West Coast Slow Net

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, 19:30 Pacific time, Steve KJ7NR #1530 holds a slow code/ragchewing net on 3704. Formality is out, just a round-table to encourage folks to get on the air. Speed will depend on who shows up, usually between 10-15 WPM unless one of the group is working on speed for a test or something like that. Bottom line is that all are invited and the only objective is to get on the air and have some fun.

Massachusetts Net de AA1HO

A local sked that we have here in MA, run by some of us local FISTS members as an informal ragchew session that ALWAYS goes at the Slowest Check-Ins' Speed. 80 METERS 3.696

EVERY SAT. AND SUN. MORNING

AT 7:30 TO 8:30 AM (EST)

Op calls QNI OR "ANY CHK-INS?"

Take care and I think this is the most enjoyable newsletter that I get, it is always refreshing to know that there are other hams that like CW the best and I always enjoy reading the articles...Thank you all! DE AA1HO ...-.-

FISTS Slow Traffic Net

by Pete Kozup K8OUA

Last month I gave you ideas about how to check into a CW traffic net. But, as I pointed out, traffic nets can be boring if you don't have traffic to send or to receive, so it's a good idea to hop in and send some traffic.

This is where people begin to freeze up - "Uhh, you mean I gotta send a message to someone?" - well, after all, the purpose of traffic nets is to handle traffic. If no one ever puts any messages into the system, we're all gonna look kinda dumb sitting there twiddling our Morse keys with nothing to say. Traffic nets thrive on traffic. Without traffic they can't exist. You, that's YOU, should be putting traffic into the nets to keep them well oiled and functioning. Frankly, even if you don't check into traffic nets or want to handle traffic, I believe it behooves you to contact a traffic hound and give them some traffic to send to someone -- look on it as your contribution to keeping this valuable tradition going.

OK, OK, how'dya do it? Many different kinds of messages are sent by traffic handlers. I try to send "welcome to FISTS" messages to new FISTS members -- just a short note saying, essentially, "Welcome to FISTS CW Club". I look addresses and phone numbers up on the internet, and put them into the system about five or six at a time. By the end of the month I've usually covered the list. You can send birthday greetings, holiday wishes, "I miss you" notes to that special someone, it really doesn't matter. Send a birthday greeting to your aunt Freda in Florida, or an Easter greeting to that old friend from the Air Force you haven't seen for years. Try it, it can renew friendships and bring smiles to the faces of those who receive them.

Every formal message has four parts -- the first part is for administrative purposes, and is called the PREAMBLE. The second part is the ADDRESS, the third, the TEXT of the message, and the fourth part is the SIGNATURE. Every message sent must have these four parts. Is that scary? Fiddly? Official nonsense? Not really, as each part makes sense.

How would you send a message to someone without an address, the text of the message, and a signature to tell who it came from? Eventually, even the preamble would come into being. Let's look at each part in turn.

The first part is called the PREAMBLE, and is needed to tell where the message originated, when it originated, how long it is, how important it is, etc. It consists of eight parts, though only six are considered necessary. These are, in order sent -- the number of the message, its precedence or importance, handling instructions, the call sign of the station originating the message, a check number which tells the number of words in the text, the city it originated in, the time it originated, and the date it originated. Usually, the handling instructions and the time are not used.

The number is simply a sequential number sent by the station originating it. Most hams begin with number "1" on January 1st, and just count the messages through to the end of the year. Others start over again each month.

The "Precedence" for most of us will be "R" or "routine". In emergency situations there are others (Emergency, Priority, Health and welfare) that can be used, but unless you are operating in an emergency situation, you will not see these.

The "check" can cause some confusion, but it is, simply, the number of words in the text of the message -- *does not include the signature or the address*. It is used to tell if a word has accidentally been left out or added. If your count of the words in the text does not agree with the check, be sure to tell the station sending the message.

Rarely, these days, is the time used.

Finally, the date should be given by the first three letters of the month the letter was written, and the number of the day (e.g., Mar

1, Aug 21, Sep 12). Incidentally, the date is the date the message was put on paper, not the date the message was delivered to you, nor, necessarily, the date the message was put into the net the first time. Time and date should always be UTC.

The preamble may seem unimportant, but can become very important if a message can not be delivered, and you want to let the sending station know. Or, if the person receiving the message wants to respond but has no forwarding address -- you can use the originating station's call sign and city to notify the sender. It also tells the originator which message it is through the message number.

Don't label the parts of the preamble as you send them -- no need to send "Ck 12", just send "12".

The importance of the ADDRESS is pretty obvious. It should include the first, last name and callsign (if applicable) of the person to receive the message on the first line, the street address, including apartment number, on the second line, the city, state and zipcode on the third line, and the telephone number with area code on the fourth line. In Morse each line of the address is separated by the prosign AA (dahdahdah). Be as complete as possible, a complete address and phone number can be the difference between a message that's delivered and one that isn't.

The TEXT is the message part of the message -- it's what you are trying to say. It should be written telegram style, and in twenty-five words or less. To save space don't begin with something like "Hello Susan this is George". Susan already knows it's being sent to her, and she'll find out about George through the signature. Stick to the important points. Leaving out smaller words such as "a", "the", "and", etc. is fine, but make sure that doing so doesn't change the meaning of your message.

Read your message ahead of time and be sure it says what you want it to say. You can use an "X" to indicate an end of sentence, but when you do, be sure to count it as a word in the text. Usually long sequences of numbers, like phone numbers, are broken into separate "words" for the check -- 330 847 0975 would be counted as three words.

The text of the message is always separated from the rest of the message with a BT (dahdidididah). So, following the address there is a BT, and following the last word of the text there is another one.

The SIGNATURE tells who is sending the message, and should, if possible, be kept short. Sometimes you see messages that have two lines of signature. I think this is too much. Usually your name and call sign, if applicable, should suffice. I add "FISTS 1254" when I send out my "welcome to FISTS" messages. I wouldn't go much beyond that, though.

Finally, when you've completed the message, if it is the last message you're sending, end with AR N (dahdahdahdit dahdit). If you have additional messages to send to the receiving station, send AR B (dahdahdahdit dahdididit). This tells the receiving station that you've either finished or have additional messages to send. That's it.

In future articles we'll discuss shortcuts -- sending a book of traffic (same message text to different addresses) and ARRL radio-grams.

If you're looking for another net to QNI, try the Maryland Slow Net, a traffic training net which, from what I've heard, is great for beginners. It meets on 3717 KHz at 1900 Eastern time, and newcomers are especially welcome. Next Tuesday or Thursday night, QNI FSN, and send a message to someone.

Remember, on FSN the only mistake is the message not sent. Till then, 73 es hpe CU on FSN es ARF (the bark of the traffic hound). Pete K8OUA

MEMBER NEWS AND VIEWS

From Bill **VE3MIQ**: "I found the following story exhilarating, disheartening and in a small way - humorous: Amateur radio operator Rich **VE3YAG** was recently presented with a trophy from his local ham club for having the most CW contacts in one year. The club sponsored a CW contest to provide some incentive for budding CW ops and the promotion of CW in their group.

"**VE3YAG** has been an amateur for about six years. For the first four years he held a basic class license with no code endorsements. Then about two years ago he took the giant step of passing the 5 WPM requirement. When time permits, he is active on CW and seldom uses phone on HF. His work keeps him away from home and his rig for about eight months of the year. When he is home, he is "Mr. Mom" to a one year old son while his wife is at work. He has little time for ham radio -- but he persists!

In 1995 his "club" introduced a contest for the most CW contacts in one year. In 1995, Rich tried his hand and got one CW contact (remember that was the year he got his 5 WPM endorsement). With only one contact, he was ashamed to enter the contest. Then in 1996 he had 80 contacts for the year. He entered the contest and much to his surprise he won the trophy.

Here is the disheartening part: Had he entered the contest in 1995, he would have won the trophy with his one contact. No other member of his radio club entered the contest. I might add that his club has a very large membership. I am very proud of Rich. 73 **BILL--VE3MIQ**"

FB, Bill and Rich! I hope you are an inspiration to your local club members and they take the challenge and give you some competition for that trophy next year! I guess the moral to that story is: Always send in your log!

From Charlie **KA8OQF**: Last month I told you about a trick set of paddles built for me by Larry **KB8SLU** that worked great as a sideswiper.

A few hours prior to the 27 Feb FISTS Slow Speed Group, Don **N6JRL** called me on 2m and said there would be a big surprise for me on the net. I gritted my teeth and held on- the suspenders were killing me. I called the net to order and Don checked in. He then said to stand by -- and the next code I heard was sent by Larry **KB8SL**, who had recently passed his 5wpm test! It was Larry's first ever HF QSO - and it he came all the sweeter because I was working him using the very set of paddles he'd built for me. That one ranks right up there in my list of ham radio all-time great moments. See Ya In May!! de **KA8OQF**

From Ted **K3CJQ**: I want you to know that I thoroughly enjoy the KeyNote and wish to thank all of the people who put the extra effort into it's publication and makeup, and excellent piece of work. I am looking forward to the late summer and/or fall, when the sun spot activity lifts and we can get back up on 15 and 10 meters for some good QSO's out of the hash we have to fight on 40/80 meters. I am surprised and delighted to note the increase of CW activity on the nets which I can contribute to the FISTS ops. I am generally up and running between 2330 and 0100 EST every night and a year ago it was hard to find anyone to QSO with; however, in the last few months I work one or two FISTS every time I power-up. And I have yet to have a FISTS op tell me that he will have to QRT because copy is too difficult through the QRN, QRM, QSB - very impressive.

I've got to agree with you Ted, FISTS ops are the best!

From Pat **WC7CKX**: Enclosed is my renewal. I sure enjoy the FISTS newsletter and especially your articles. I've been a ham now for two years with about 1160 QSO's and almost all on CW. I had a bummer of a day last week in my shack (bedroom) as my KW 830 rig did a "meltdown". It seems the power supply shorted and because I had left the room, it was a total loss. A good friend came to the rescue and sold me a knwd 130 with CW filter and now I am back on the air. Ham radio sure has made it easier dealing with these long Alaska winters. Take care and thanks for all your work for FISTS. 73.

Thanks for the kind words Pat. I'm glad you are enjoying FISTS! 1160 Q's in 2 years is remarkable - those Alaska winters must be something. All I know about Alaska, I've seen on my all-time favorite TV show Northern Exposure! Your QTH really isn't up on stilts like the drawing on your QSL card, is it?

From Dortha **N4SHE** and Del **AB4TH**: I would like to encourage all FISTS members to write ARRL and ask them to please keep our CW bands for CW. May not be many Novice licenses but most start out on CW in the Novice portion of 40 and 80 meters.

ARRL is the only organization we amateurs have to convey our wishes to the FCC. If they don't protect our CW their membership will drop drastically.

The SSB portion of 75 meters has gone to the dogs already with the "abuse of the handicap waivers." I went to CW after spending five years on SSB. If we lose our CW portion, ham radio will bite the dust. Thanks you FISTS Club. Lets keep up the fight to protect CW.

From Jay **W3AN**: Many of us are familiar with the difficulty in learning CW late in life. I began in my late 50's and it wasn't easy. I can now copy 10-20 wpm in my head on a good day. It must be wonderful to have learned it at age 18 say, in the service. I hear those guys out there 40 or 50 years later hammering out perfect CW at 35 wpm.

I've heard far more hams out there sending not so perfect CW. It gets so bad sometimes that I can't even copy it. The most common characteristic of poor CW is short, or no, spacing between characters, letters and words. Everything is run together. Then there's the guy who sets his character speed at 40 wpm, then sends at 15 wpm. I guess he thinks he's sending faster!

How can people digress to such an unflattering level of CW skill and not be aware of it? I used a straight key when I was learning CW and only recently got myself a paddle. I managed to produce pretty good quality CW with the straight key and did it in part by recording and playing back myself over and over.

There's no better way to learn how you sound to the rest of the world. That's when it became obvious to me just how important proper spacing between characters is - at any sending speed.

Record yourself sending unusual random sentences. Or better yet, record yourself in live QSO. Play it back and make objective conclusions. Work on fixing the problem. And there will be problems.

I would not recommend using a paddle/keyer until you can send good code at 13-15 wpm with a straight key. That builds a good foundation and puts you in direct control for timing dots, dashes and spaces. Bugs, paddles and the like come about only as a means to increase speed and eliminate fatigue. But competence and confidence must come first.

From Dan **AA3AW** (photo on page 8 #36): After reading the last KeyNote, I remembered that something I indulged in back in early 1942. I was a recruit in the Air Force at Bolling Field, Washington DC, and they must have figured that since I played drums, I would be a good radio operator. I went to code school at that field and like many others, I read advertising on buses by saying the words in Morse code. The incident I want to refer to was another recruit came along who also was a drummer. We both had brought our drum sticks along to try to practice when time and conditions permitted. The barracks we lived in had 2 x 4 lumber for railings going down the front and back steps. We used to send messages to each other (each of us lived in different barracks) by tapping out Morse code on the wooden 2 x 4 railings. Of course, all the other radio men copied our messages! We hit a single stick for a dot and a crushed roll for a dash. A crushed roll is using one stick to get a series of beats out of one stroke.

It's hard to explain this to a non-drummer. I haven't thought about that for many years. I am still playing the drums (going on 63 years). I gave up Morse code upon discharge Dec 1945, but started again 45 years later. I passed 20 wpm test with Novice test and made Extra 17 months later. Radio work in the service was boring because I was a monitor radio op and copied 5 letter code groups 6 hours a day. It's a lot more fun now. How I back into it is another story and I won't bore you with it now. Thanks for listening and hope you enjoyed reading about this novel Morse transmission.

Thanks for sharing that with us Dan, what a fun memory! We'd love to hear how you got into ham radio and found out that Morse can be fun. I can't imagine copying six hours of code groups - you must have been hearing dits and dahs in your sleep!

From Brian **AA2LK**: I just want my FISTS friends to know that I am still a FISTS member; I've got my coffee mug and FISTS stickers, I just don't have a radio! Hope all is well with all. Good hamming, 73 AA2LK

From Jim **W6UJX**: "Having a love of CW for more than 40 years, I completely sympathize with the goals of your organization, and consider it an honor to be a member. Since 1973 I have not been able to have a "big" antenna. In that time, I have used modest verticals to overcome city antenna restrictions and deed restrictions. To compete for DX with limited antennas, the only answer is skill in CW. Many others have found DX to be an incentive to become more proficient in CW. It made me feel good to see that in the recent Heard Island DXpedition contact breakdown that CW was first. With the proficiency gained in DX competition, one can easily move on to the many other pleasures of CW. I have recently moved to a new QTH which will let me put up more substantial antennas. So I am looking to become more active. I also enjoy reading the mail while getting ready to go to work by monitoring high speed CW scheduled ragchewing. 900 MHz headphones can let one become independent of the ham shack. In the mid '60s' I operated CW mobile. Hopefully (since I again have a long drive to work again (I will be able to return to CW mobile soon. Thanks for bringing together good folks in a good cause."

Stan **AC6TO** makes a very good point: We need to scatter the FISTS around the band more. Now that we have almost a couple thousand North American FISTS alone, the .058 frequencies are getting pretty darn crowded. Stan suggests we call CQ FISTS below the .058 frequency, say from 30 Mhz down, so we can all have a chance.

Another thing to remember is that .058 is a CALLING Frequency. This means, use it to make contact and then move up or down to (QSY) another frequency to chat. This would be especially helpful for those FISTS who have regular skeds - if you'd move them off the .058's more FISTS would be able to find each other. I've had the chance to get on the air a little more recently and can testify that there is no shortage of FISTS on the bands! It is certainly VERY wonderful, it makes me so proud to hear all the CQing FISTS going on up and down the bands.

Dick WA7SNY sent me a copy of the USCG Bulletin ZUT, in which FISTS is mentioned. Thanks ZUT! Dick says there is a steady carrier on 14.058 in his location in Oregon. He's talked with a couple east coast stations and they mentioned that he was their first West coast QSO.

Dick is looking forward to retirement in two years and perhaps a bit more DX. He was a ham for 20 years before taking any interest in DX. He says he'll never be a big gun, but he likes to slip in between the big boys and pick one off!

An answer to a question about the origin of the word "radio" from John KQ6ES. "Radio as we now use the word is a shortened form of the word Radiotelegraphy. The word Radio itself is part of a family of words, including radiate, radius, ray, etc. The immediate ancestor of 'radio' is the Latin 'radius', still used today but originally meaning a spoke of a wheel, a ray or beam or light, or a staff. The earliest use of the word "radio" as we use it today without being attached to another word (radiotelegraphy, radiophone, etc.) was in 1903 but didn't come into popular use until 1910-1915. Also I am very pleased to have sponsored Becky, KF6GUH, #2961. She will be a great addition to the ranks.

By the way, for future consideration: I complained a little after last Fall's sprint, that everyone was on 20m. I tried like crazy to get contacts on the other bands and finally got one on 40m from a non-Fist (AB7JW who was nice enough to send his log in). Perhaps something could be done to encourage working more than one band? Bonus points or extra multipliers? It would make for more contacts if different bands were used and it would keep the action going through the whole Sprint. Maybe you could ask for everyone's input in a future Keynote. 73 and CUL de KQ6ES John #2406

From Greg N9WC: When I have been on the air, I have been alternating between CW and the digital modes. I really love the TenTec Omni that I bought at Dayton. It does a great job for me. I will be getting a new amplifier and I will be putting up a new antenna.

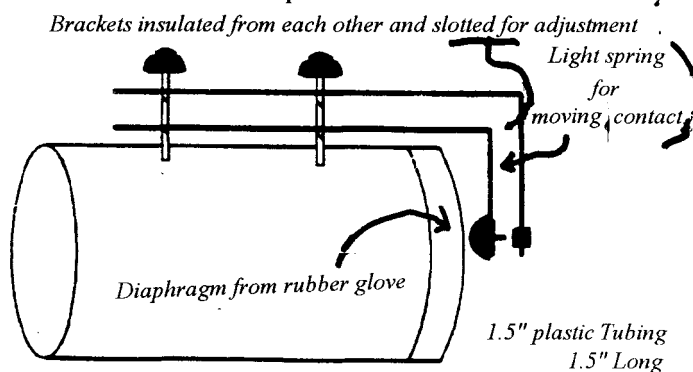
Breath Activated CW Key

Thanks to Ken VE6KJL #2167 for sharing a breath activated key he invented a few years ago. He writes "I read the article by Larry K0LHV about troubles he and others have with CW due to arthritis, tendonitis, etc. I have heard of many versions of a breath activated CW key and this is my simple design which can produce very nice CW with a bit of practice. I keep mine on the bench with my homebrew straight key and homebrew keyer and paddle and give them all regular exercise, hi hi, never could use a bug though.

I'm celebrating my first year as a FISTS and certainly enjoy all programs and congratulations to you and everyone who contributes to the Keynote for the super newsletters.

When I took the wireless course in the RCAF in 1941, we learned the code by singing it before we were introduced to a key. I have fond memories of groups of us going downtown on the trolley and each of us taking turns singing out the signs on the walls along the streets, while the rest of us copied it.

When I read a description of this key some time ago, I felt it would be an interesting project and in some circumstances of practical use. Using material on hand, this is what I came up with:



I mount it on a stand to keep both hands free and sing into the open end. I also built a mobile model that's held in place by a guitar players' harmonica bracket around the neck.

This key was originally printed in the Northern Alberta Radio Club newsletter "Emitter" in November 1995.

CODE BUDDIES

Many thanks to those of you who have contacted Ed in regard to volunteering for the FISTS Code Buddy program. Please remember to give Ed feedback as to how it's going with their buddies. This can be done via E-Mail, letter, fax

or phone. I also need to contact someone who knows how to handle a bug. I have a request from a FISTS Member in Texas for help with a bug. If anyone can help him, please give me your information. Edward R. Breneiser, WA3WSJ 775 Moonflower Avenue Reading, PA 19606-3447 breneiser@talon.net

QRP With John Shannon K3WWP

Well, it's time to sit down at the keyboard and pound out another column. Gee, I wish it was as easy as that. A lot of thought goes into these columns. Most of the thinking concerns just what to write about. Once I come up with a topic, fleshing it out into a column isn't that hard. That's where you can help me out. If there is a specific topic you would like me to write about, please let me know. The ideas for my previous columns have come largely from you. Thanks.

This month, I am writing about the technical aspect of QRP, and that fits in nicely with an idea I received asking about antennas for the QRPer living in an apartment or otherwise restricted in what he can use for an antenna.

It is very important for the QRPer to have the best sounding signal possible on the air. If it is not going to be an overwhelmingly strong signal to attract attention, then it should attract attention by its cleanness and crispness. That statement was reinforced recently in one of the national magazines when a writer mentioned that a clean, well-keyed QRP signal will often beat out a stronger, but defective (chirpy, buzzy, etc.) or sloppily keyed signal in a pileup.

How do you get that good sounding signal? I don't want this to be an overly technical article telling you that you should use a .01 mfd capacitor in conjunction with a 47 k resistor to change the rise time of your keying waveform, or other things like that. I do want to say that you should check your signal on the air to find out if there is anything wrong with it. This is oftentimes not easy to do, especially if you use a transceiver like the QRP+. This (and I presume other transceivers - not having used any except the QRP+, I can't say for sure) transceiver uses a sidetone monitor for monitoring your keying. This sidetone has nothing to do with your transmitted signal. It may sound great, but you may be transmitting a very chirpy, buzzy, clicky, etc. signal. Don't interpret this as my saying anything bad about the QRP+. Every one of them that I have heard does put out a FB signal. I'm just making a point that it is important to check how your signal actually sounds on the air. Probably the best way to do this is to check with a very good ham friend of yours - one who is not afraid to tell you if something is wrong. Even better would be to swap stations with him so you can hear your own signal.

Now that you've checked your signal, what do you do if you find something wrong? If you are using a home designed and built rig, then you should know enough about it to figure out what is wrong. If not, the publications like the ARRL Handbook, etc. provide a wealth of information to help you figure it out. If you use a kit rig, I am sure that the kit manufacturer is the place to go to find out the cure. The same with a commercially manufactured rig. The company that made the rig wants it to sound good on the air because that is an advertisement for his company, and if you remind him of that when you contact him about the problem, I am sure he will be willing to help you solve the problem.

One quick fix that may be overlooked at times is simply to be sure your battery is fully charged if you use a battery powered rig. Once a battery drops to a certain level, all kind of strange things will happen to your signal, starting off with a slight chirp and progressing to a major frequency

drift, then a complete shutdown of your rig.

The next thing to consider is how to get all of that 5 watts (or less) of RF into your antenna? It is important when running QRP that losses in your transmitter, tuner, and antenna itself be kept to a minimum. A station running a KW can afford to lose quite a bit of power in corroded connections or a mismatched antenna system and still be heard very easily on the bands. The QRPer (and really all amateurs) should strive to completely eliminate all losses.

First of all, periodically check all the connections in your antenna system. If you have bolt and nut connections, make sure they are as tight as possible. Remember unless you live somewhere where the temperature is constant the year round, metal parts will contract and expand with temperature changes and that can cause a loose or intermittent connection. The same with connections in your antenna tuner and transmitter. Check them periodically and tighten them if needed. Look at all your solder connections. If you have any doubt about them, resolder them. A solder connection that started out good may deteriorate over the years. Make sure that all connections to ground are good. One thing that puzzled me for a bit was a frequency shift in my VFO. My frequency would jump just enough to be noticeable and annoying. I tried just about everything I could think of to fix it, but nothing seemed to work. It turned out that the piston type trimmer capacitors I use depend on the screw threads making the connection to ground, and apparently they had corroded a bit and were intermittent. Spraying them with contact cleaner and working the piston in and out several times cured the problem. So don't overlook anything.

All the good connections in the world won't help if you have a mismatch between your antenna and transmitter. To be absolutely sure of having a near-perfect match use a setup as follows: Transmitter->SWR Meter->Antenna Tuner->Antenna. Many rigs have built in SWR indicators and antenna tuners. If you are sure you can trust them, fine. If your rig doesn't have them, use an external meter and tuner.

I'll talk about tuners in a moment, but first let's mention something about antennas. The ideal situation, of course, would be to have a huge parcel of land with room for a separate antenna for each band that you operate. Those antennas would be mounted as high as possible, using the lowest loss feedline possible. Enough about pipe dreams. Only a small percentage of amateurs have that situation. Most of us must figure out how to fit some chunk of wire into a tiny city lot or even our attic or apartment itself.

Every situation is different so it is not possible to give a specific answer to what antenna can be used in your apartment or house. For instance some amateurs use a balcony railing for an antenna. That doesn't help you at all if you don't have a balcony. The same with the folks who use their drainspout for an antenna. That's fine if it's metal, but supposing it's made of a non-metallic material. The answer is to take a good look at your situation and figure out what will work for you.

Don't worry!! Just about any piece of wire will work as an antenna. Just string it out as straight and as long as possible - as high as possible. If you can't get it straight, live with the bends and twists. They won't hurt you. The secret is to get the RF to radiate from that wire. That can be done by using

an antenna tuner. My tuner is a CLC Tee type tuner as hopefully shown in the diagram. I don't know how well we can reproduce graphics in the Keynote. Tuning the tuner consists of three adjustments - two tuning capacitors and an inductor. Start off by tuning your transmitter for 5 watts output into a dummy load (either 50 or 72 ohms). Once this is done, don't change any settings on the transmitter. Then set the antenna tuner capacitors to mid-range, and short out turns on the coil to get the reflected power as low as possible while the output stays at or very near to 5 watts. When you find a good tap on the coil, adjust the tuning capacitors to reduce the reflected power to zero. If you can't get it quite to zero, move the tap on the coil one turn in or out, and try again. Some combination of the two capacitors and the coil taps will give you 5 watts out and zero reflected power. Make a note of the settings so you can quickly return to them, and proceed to the next band.

If you want to try to duplicate my circuit, it is not necessary to have exact values for the caps and coils. Use whatever you have at hand. If you only work the higher bands, i.e. 40M-10M, the caps and coil can be smaller, for example. To change taps on the coil, you can use alligator clips if you seldom change bands or rig up a rotary switch for fast band changing in contests. Remember to use insulated knobs or couplers on the tuning caps since they are not grounded and could give you an RF burn if you touch the metal shaft directly. Also your body capacitance will detune the tuner without an insulated knob or shaft.

I didn't intend this to be a construction article, so my description of the tuner is somewhat generic. If you are seriously interested in building such a unit, and have specific questions, feel free to ask me via Email or regular mail.

I can get a 1:1 SWR (zero reflected power) on all 9 bands with my tuner using a piece of wire about 100 feet long having many twists and bends that runs out my shack window, up the side of the house, through the attic, and out in a short sloping section into the back yard. Hardly an ideal situation, yet it has provided me with over 13,000 QSO's in all 50 states, all continents, and 125 countries over the past 4 years using 5 watts or less output.

I think too many amateurs are intimidated by antennas, and believe that unless you have the perfect antenna system, you can't succeed. I fell into that category myself regarding 160 Meters. I thought QRP and my simple wire antenna could not possibly work on that band, and so I avoided the band for years. However, two years ago, I decided to try, and was I ever wrong! I have had great success there, working well over 1000 QSO's in 39 states, VE, and VP9. I do have problems working DX on 160 (and 80 as well), but other than that, I do very well. I can usually work 200-250 QSO's in the 160 meter contests each time.

Let me know what you have done with QRP and less than ideal antennas, and I'll pass it along in my column.

Summing up, if you don't have an ideal antenna situation. Don't be afraid to try QRP. It will work! Be sure that your signal is as clean and well keyed as possible. That helps also.

Next month some ideas about on-the-air things to do with QRP. Visit my web site at <http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/3852>, Email me at johnshan@alltel.net, or

write to 478 E. High St., Kittanning, PA 16201-1304. I am always glad to hear from you. Till then, 73. K3WJP

CW On TEN METERS Last Summer by Doug WA6PJQ

200 CW contacts is my final tally at the end of the 10 meter sporadic "E" session last summer, ending the first week of Sept. I lucked out when I happened to copy a group of hams sending CW on 10 meters the 3rd week of May, a band that I usually don't pay much attention to since I normally work CW only. The odd part was that they were going back and forth in the middle of the Novice phone band at 28.400. When I broke in I discovered that I had stumbled on to an Elmer Net. I was rare DX, since most of the ops were new to radio, none of them had as yet made a contact outside of their home state. After working each of them in turn on CW, they requested I switch to SSB. Turned out that this was the standard format; Net Control would give advice to the members on phone. After racing around the shack for five minutes looking for my microphone I finally got back to the net and explained to each op that I was a CW guy and that I did not have an 10-10 number. After signing with the net all hell broke loose with about 15 stations calling me for a SSB QSO. After explaining about FISTS and the fun aspects of code I started getting calls on CW. Later I got into a net on 28.185 with the Motor City Radio Club at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI. NCS was a YL who was the president of the club. Turned out that she and I had attended high school at about the same time. She and I corresponded and discovered that we had many mutual friends but had not previously met. Such is the fun of ham radio. I also found several other CW nets and in each case I was treated as though I were rare DX. The frequencies from 28.175 to 28.300 is set aside for CW I.D. beacons and CW nets. Beacons are used to determine if the band is open and where the skip signals are from. Beacon owners like to receive signal reports and will send a confirming QSL card.

The entire summer went this way. My total worked also included 300 phone QSO's for a total of 500. 10 Meters turned out to be red hot last summer. I managed to work Italy while many of the East Coast guys were able to work 15 European countries. In the middle of July the band stayed open for 24 hours and one guy in 3 land worked LV3HU in Lithuania. The band was open better than two of every three days on the average. On some days 20 was very poor while 10 was wide open.

I'm looking forward to working 10 meters again this coming summer. Look for me about 28.400. I may even get down in the area around 28.025 if the sunspot cycle has started to pick up by then. 73 **WA6PJQ**

The Future??

by Andy N3NNH

CW Friends: This is written tongue-in-cheek in response to the ARRL WRC-99 Planning Committee proposal which, if ratified -- an appropriate verb! -- would allow us to retain only 70% of our present CW band on 80 meters and 17% of our present CW band on 40 meters.)

Prediction -- based up on the farcical changes in the licensing structure and the CW allocations on the bands, a few years from now ARRL WRC-Somethingorother will meet and the following will be their recommendations:

(1) CW will no longer have any band space dedicated. After all, it is slow, inefficient, and practiced only by a few military veterans and their retarded cronies who often risked their lives to transmit. Holders of the new Basic License, available free with a carton of Basic cigarettes, should be advised that radio waves are equally well received by friend and foe.

(2) CW, due to its modest ability to QRM (that means interfere. If you don't know what interfere means, speak to anyone that does SSB. These people did not invent QRM, they merely perfected it), may only be practiced twixt the hours of 0100 and 0200 local time. True, that precludes any meaningful DX for the dit-and-dah people. Tough cakes! It is far more important that the rights of those who bellow and belch on SSB or transmit their cute little pornographic pictures via SSTV have priority!

(3) Inasmuch as the CW people will have less time to transmit, they are required to spend (2) hours per day, or alternatively, 50 hours monthly (February will henceforth be known as You-Got-the-Schinitzel Month) at the home of ham friends assisting them in their SSB, SSTV, RTTY, etc. CW people can be put to good use cleaning the shack, pushing the PTT button for their SSB counterparts in their newly elevated position, releasing that button upon order, getting the booze, fetching breakfast and any other meals needed for really long QSO's (One annually, the CW person may gently remind the Resident Ham that the PTT could equally be labeled RTL- Release to Listen). Note: It may take some time for the CW person to get used to some of the Anglo-Saxon invectives. Please furnish a glossary, particularly for the lengthy combinations of words one hears used all too frequently. Also, the much wider bandwidth in many of the modes will require some adjustment for Mr. Morse's aficionados. Be patient -- we can be trained!

(4) Licensing, alas, will be done differently. There will be only one class of license. It will be the No-Class license. It will be issued at the time that one receives

his/her/its Social Security number in the US. There will be no demeaning testing. Certainly no absurd and antiquated CW requirement. Nothing to know, nothing to worry about. No more heartbreak or outbreak of psoriasis. No more 20 minutes of study to advance. There will be no place to advance. You merely get on the air -- your CW Remle (that's Elmer spelled backwards) will string your antenna for you, permanently lend you his/her rig (the CW person can go the Resident Ham's shack to do the little transmitting allowed, if necessary, with the appropriate permission of course) and you take it from there. Should one be bewildered by the complicated facets of operation, such as turning on the power, your Remle is a mere phone call away. Better yet, insist that your Remle check in on the hour via the twisted pair. Truly high-level stuff like switching bands or frequencies should be left to your CW Remle.

(5) Simultaneously, such lofty notions such as etiquette, courtesy and sound operating practices should be ignored. After all, the First Amendment means freedom of speech, does it not? By all means, if it enters your mind, let it come out of your mouth! No rules, no restrictions and no bounds of decency. Someone talking on your frequency? Problem solved -- TURN UP THE POWER! Show those fools who's boss! You are a HAM, by gosh, and the world should know it! And, furthermore, YOU OWN A RADIO! Go get 'em Tiger!

WRC-99 joins the US Coast Guard, MARS and numerous other groups who should know better in the hotly-contested race for the Convuluted Thinking Award. This little-know, but becoming every more sought, revolving trophy is awarded to the person/group/stormtrooper doing the most to murder Morse before it spreads. You folks have given the term narrow-mined a whole new dimension. I take my hat off to you -- OOPS, almost said LID! As Yogi Berra would say, "If Sam Morse were alive today, he'd turn over in his grave."

I do wish to apologize profusely to those operators who always act as ladies and gentlemen on the air and who exhibit good operating practice and courtesy, regardless of the mode. To those who by dint of physical challenges find CW impractical, certainly no offense is intended.

Dissenting views may be expressed the air to the undersigned in CW at my choice of speed. Any offense given to those crowd-followers who are standing in line to get on the bandwagon to bash Morse is purely intentional. Advice (1) Get a real life and (2) Don't forget your medication! Andy Young, N3NNH,



KEY NOTE



Sec: E. (Geo) Longden, G3ZQS. 119 Cemetery Rd., DARWEN, BB3 2LZ, England. 01254-703948
Packet: G3ZQS@GB7HVU. E-Mail: fist1@compuserve.com or morseman@airtime.co.uk

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NETS

Sunday QRS 0900 (loc) 3.575 2E0AJS
US 0100Z on 14058
Tues: GC0IPX/P 1930 ON 3.558 (+/-)
Wed: US Net 0100z on 14058
Thurs: QRS 1900 (loc) on 3575. 2E0AJS
DX 14/21/28.058 on the hour for 15mins
Pse keep watch all Novice allocations
UK Net Controls use GX0IPX/P

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GREETINGS

It's always happening. Whenever I switch on the rig and tune to 20m, I catch a watery signal from across the pond and we barely make a QSO before the bottom drops out of the band. You people value your DX conditions that much? I suggest you grease my palm with some ale money and I'll agree to stop off the bands.

80m is beginning to get back to its old self. Well at least, "G" stations are readable within the UK though much of the European stuff is still competitively strong. For some reason, despite fair conditions, 40m seems to have run out of favour except for a bunch of regulars but the band is still offering it's usual span of short skip to medium dx. If things keep going this way, we may well find paths across the pond on 20 and 15 metres. Some members report consistent medium to high signals coming in from South America though despite turning the beam in that direction, I am out of luck up here in the NW of England. The rig is usually ticking over on 20m whilst I do other things and it is surprising how many times ZL, VK and JA appear and a 549 signal from Barbados was a got-away because I couldn't get back to the rig in time.

I have some feelings of sympathy with those poor folks who are bordering upon complete deafness but they seem to be more numerous than I remember from earlier years. This becomes apparent when something like one out of every five cars that pass me on the road assaults my ears with very audible thumps of bass drums, the inevitable cacophony of tortured guitar strings and the sound of some wailing youth whose narrative is lost in the racket and this despite windows being firmly shut against the weather. What it must sound like actually INSIDE the vehicle is beyond my imagination.

Nancy, whose memory is clearly superior to my own, remembered my birthday and chose to publish this in her N.A. Memo. My thanks to all those kind people who sent cards and e-mail greetings. I confess that I care little these days for marking yet another year lost from my life but the sentiments were inescapable especially from KA8OQF who indicated that he would not have sent the greeting card at all had he not got it for free. Hmm.

BEACONS N' BAND PLANS

From G3XJS (G-QRP EMC to EUCW) info concerning the beacon, DK0WCY to the EUCW. This has been transmitting propagation data on approximately 3557.5KHz for the last two years and is operated by DARC with the assumed approval of the IARU being located on 80m as an addition to the main (30M) frequency because of poor reception in Europe of 10144KHz. The presence of this beacon has caused problems to many QRP cw operators particularly in November 1995 when the beacon drifted onto 3559KHz.

Whilst I applaud the valuable information derived from it, I am concerned that the beacon can present problems for QRP stations working at the LF end of the segment using basic or home brewed receivers with poor selectivity. It also disturbs me that

the beacon is located so deeply within the accepted CW segment when more suitable frequencies are unused. I am a simplistic soul who considers that it would surely be wiser to place beacons at the extreme extents of the bands where they would serve the dual purpose of providing the information they were intended to do and also clearly designating where the band begins and ends; 3501 and 3799 for instance.

G3XJS also points out that CW operators are becoming very concerned about the intrusion by HF data operators into the cw segments of both 40m and 20m. *There seems little attempt on their behalf to recognize Internationally agreed band plans or even the CW QSOs that are in progress on frequencies which they decide to use. There are many occasions when it is almost impossible to conduct QSOs around 7030KHz or 14060 (there is a persistent intruder on 14057) because of the severe levels of QRM from data transmissions, indeed there seems a concerted attempt by data transmission operators to take over frequencies which fall well with the CW segments of the band. Band plans are not mandatory but if we are all to live together, harmoniously on the bands, then there has to be broad agreement on and acceptance of frequency allocations for different modes on all bands. It is wrong for one minority interest group to unilaterally adopt its own band plan at the expense of other legitimate users.*

MARITIME MOBILE NET

Further to Mick's (LA0HA) plea for a cw Maritime plea for a Maratime Mobile Net with log-in and register for yachts and small vessels at sea, I learn from G4GJY that RNARS member Bill, G4FRN has been running such a service on SSB for many years. Call-in QRG is around 14.315 I understand but in view of the number of small vessels who are able to carry little more than a miniscule QRP cw rig, it would take little effort to duplicate this service on 14.052 (the RNARS calling spot).

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following who joined us after the last update:

2823	DL1AVD	Klaus	21824	M0AFJ	Tim
2825	G3YRP	Ian	2826	G4EYY	Roy
2827	M0ASU	Karl	2828	G0WAS	Alan
2829	G0MCE	Bob	2830	GM4UGB	Richard
2831	M0ANL	Andy	2832	M0AKA	Gordon
2833	OK1RP	Petr	2834	G0WJY	Alex
2835	GW4IUN	Ron	2836	G0RRF	Peter

As you can see, our own growth rate is pretty fair but on the other side of the pond, it is phenomenal. The end result of all this is that the bottom line at the time of writing was 2075 which is soon to be increased even further.

All this means much more work for Bob and myself and this is further bolstered by the continuing run of vanity calls arriving from the US contingent. As I mentioned last month, the dam burst within a few weeks of the option being offered and this slowly tailed off to a river and then to a stream. Just when we think it has ceased altogether, someone else comes up with another call (we currently have W1CW and W3CW) and Brian, N8IAG, opted for W8BL (his initials being BL) and who is to blame him when the option is there. Hi. We also have our own variations as noted on a later page.

LAST SUNDAY LADDER

Gerry, GM4BAE submits the following for 10/02/97:

Call	Member	MTot	NonM	Prev	Total
G4LHI	19	38	1	132	171
G0MGD	16	32	9	125	166
GW0SGG	13	26	3	124	153
G4OOS	19	38	1	107	146
G4PTE	11	22	3	102	127
G0TBD	14	28	0	91	119
G0FVS	9	18	1	51	70
GW4PXQ	11	22	0	47	69
G0MRH	13	26	3	29	58
G0VBH	2	4	0	26	30
G4RBE	14	28			28
G0PEH	2	4	3	10	17
G0IFX	8	16			16
G0ATR	4	8			8

The tail end of the ladder seems fairly static whilst the upper echelon is making steady progress. There is all the time in the world for the picture to change and, indeed, I would expect it to do so as contact potential starts to become exhausted at the top leaving the lower element to capture those which have already been claimed.

We also look forward to more EU members joining in because up to now, there is very little signs of activity from this source. I remind you that even if you are joining in on a "fun" basis, your logs will still be appreciated for check purposes.

Gerry tells me that at a meeting with GM4HYF at a rally, mention was made of the MEGS Morse learning tapes and there is a possibility that these may become available to FISTS members. May I suggest that if anyone wishes to enquire further into these for their own purposes that they should contact GM4HYF via packet @GB7SAN. Back in the days when I was tutoring, such material was not easily available and I had to spend hours doing by hand what is now done in minutes with a computer. Would have appreciated that offer then for sure. Hi.

IT'S A LIE

The camera I am told, never lies. However, having received a print from Charlie which was published in last months Keynote, I realised that on this occasion at least, something was clearly amiss. I therefore undertook to make a small correction, the result of which is here displayed.



FROM ACROSS THE POND

Returning with Tammy, I noted the postman labouring up the road and we both met at the door. He handed me a bunch of letters including a package from Nancy which contained her North American Memo and the Year Book of members photographs. The postman continued on his way but seemed to walk with a much easier gait and opening the Memo held a clue to the revival of his physical well being. The Memo comprised 24 pages in all and the Year Book was double this.

A few of our newer members are unaware of the fact that the US chapter produces their own news letter of which, Keynote is just a small part and Nancy, spared my chore of actually printing the publication, is able to use a much looser typographical style and

simply send the finished offering to the printer. This points to the reason why the NA subs are something like double our own. Also, much of her publication is direct contribution from members which arrives either as digital information on a floppy disc or type written ready for scanning and conversion to text via the Optical Character Recognition software. In fact, I do have OCR myself but unless there is more than (say) a full column the hassle of scanning, conversion and perusing the resultant text file for errors is more trouble than simply re-typing it.

She includes a listing of callsign changes (vanity calls) though I am not sure if it is comprehensive, derived from Ed, N7CFA who takes care of the list. There are 67 of these currently though they continue to creep in as opposed to the flood that was unleashed when the vanity call programme was first introduced. To encourage members to submit their photographs, she introduces a monthly draw offering the lucky member a FIST fabric patch and 50 gold stickers.

Jeff, VE1ZAC covers 3 columns with part 1 of his introduction to the "Carolina Windom" which seems to offer something for restricted spaces in the way of an all band antenna. The traditional Windoms are fed off-centre at a high impedance point with open wire line which permits multi band operation at a somewhat higher VSWR than that of a normal centre fed dipole. Jeff advises that there are two versions of the Carolina, the "80 special" (66 feet) and the "Beam 80 special" (50 feet) which perform differently according to the configuration chosen. The article was a little vague about this but I suspect that by using a specially designed transformer (balun) the antenna is centre fed with a recommended length of 70' of RG8X. This balun is somewhat beefy and it is strongly recommended that it be supported directly, the remaining wire being less demanding. It is designed to operate from 80 through 10m including the WARC bands and as far as performance goes, on 40m the antenna behaves like a full size or better and on 20m it operates as a type of collinear, producing a BIG signal. No graphics were included though I shall endeavour to obtain more info from the suppliers, Radio Works.

John, K3WVP, offers tips on QRP contesting particularly dealing with CQs and responses and I am happy that he deals with the thorny question of long drawn out strings here. This should not happen at the best of times but particularly not in a contest. Bob, K9AAU quotes from "Whence goes Ham Radio", saying that AD4VL puts it very well. I would add that as a truly emergency communication, the Code has not been replaced by high tech. Nothing beats making and breaking a circuit or pounding on something (even brass). The latter saved an almost totally paralyzed patient in a busy hospital ward, plenty of doctors and nurses ignoring him but fortunately, one doctor picked up his SOS sent by tapping a spoon on the metal bed frame.

An interesting snippet here from Rick, W19S who suffers horrendous interference from "touch lamps". It is perhaps fortunate that these gadgets are not quite so popular over here but the capacitive body of a lamp is made to respond to touch and switches state. Great, we could have the bedside lamp flashing out like a heliograph due to the sexual drive of a couple of moths whilst it is sending your rig up the wall. Hi.

The rest of the memo is largely domestic but gives a table showing the results of the "Fall Sprint" with KQ4VH followed by WA7YYY (the Cowlitz club) and KB3BKJ.

WA7YYY will be joining the hares in a bout of spring madness Saturday 01 March 1800 to 2200z on 14055 as well as locally on 40m. Ops may be K7WF, KJ7OX or N7CFA amongst other possibles.

BLOOPER

Got the following via e-mail from a rather embarrassed Nancy "Yesterday we visited a gathering of about 30 CW buffs in Fenton MI. I'm not a good public speaker, it makes me a nervous wreck, so I'm thankful Randy K8EZ does most of the "work". But I was fielding questions after the Presentation. I know this FISTS stuff backwards and forwards, so I never use notes. One of the questions was about the Century Award. So, while attempting to explain that you exchange your FISTS number with others on the air to work toward a total of 100 points, I decided to explain that when you join FISTS, you are assigned a consecutive number....only I couldn't decide if I wanted to say "consecutive"- or "sequential" number. Since I was winging

it, and trying to decide quickly, I fumbled and it came out "consexual"! I realized what I said, and quickly said "...umm...I mean...consensual!". Realizing that wasn't right either, I glanced over at Randy, who looked like he had been struck by lightning. I'm usually very ladylike, never swearing or anything, and to hear me blurt out a blooper like that was really funny. Everyone was laughing, I was about 10 shades of red and wanted the floor to swallow me up. This all happened in a second or two but it seemed like an eternity. I was laughing too, so I took a deep breath and said SEQUENTIAL loud and clear and went on with the speech. It sure was a good ice breaker, but what a way to give a leave a first impression. I thought I had better go public with my story rather than give it an extended life on the grapevine, hi!!"

ODDS N' ENDS

The success of last year's GB10 series has prompted the examiners to ask Roy, G4SSH, to set up another session this year. The date fixed is 10-12 May but I have no other details at present. The RA declined to issue GB11 call signs so watch out for GB0 prefixes followed by a county identification. This information subject to confirmation.

Compuserve crept up on me whilst I was not looking and my e-mail address (as ammended on the banner) is fist1@compuserve.com. The old address: 100101.620 is still valid though if you prefer to use it or, of course if you are not a Compuserve customer, 100101.620@compuserve.com. You may also shuffle mail to me as: morseman@airtime.co.uk. I don't check into this one as frequently as Compuserve but there's no sweat and it will most likely be via airtime that the web page (when we can get all the necessary gubbins fixed up) will be accessible.

Got a tellingbone call from G4ZPY to advise me that the special for FIST OF THE YEAR has been despatched. I know one member who will be chuffed. Hi.

Congratulations to Jack - ex 2W0ALY on his new call MW0AUH. Also to Jenny, 2W1FAA now MW1BJF.

OM LOW POWER SPRING SPRINT

Easter Monday March 31, 1500-2000z, single operator only. I have a copy of the rules for this one if anyone is in need of them but it is one of those which is somewhat complicated by multipliers.

Morsum Magnificat



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1791-1872

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NO SURRENDER

I anticipated a flood in response to last months letters column suggesting a trade off between segments of UHF/SHF for extended band space on some HF bands and possible exclusive status on 80m. I can see that G0ONS is trying to be the "nice guy" but when you are dealing with Government departments, it is possibly the wrong stance to adopt. I report from GODJA: "I am a keen constructor having in the past been active on 10 and 24GHz as well as HF and VHF using a variety of equipment both home brew and commercial so I hope I can speak from both sides of the fence. In my opinion, it is dangerous to talk about bartering frequencies as I would suggest that this would not result in significant improvement in HF privileges and under-

mine our ability to put forward a united opposition to the erosion of access to all bands. For example, if we as FISTS were to suggest that we surrendered 2.3GHz because few members seem to use it, could we expect support from the many microwave enthusiasts if any of "our" bands came under threat."

Dave points out that we have already lost part of the 10GHz band to commercial interests and he considers that 144 and 432MHz could be placed in jeopardy by the Little LEO satellites. He points to 73KHz which can in no way be regarded as recompense for the above piracy even though he does have a notice of variation to operate that frequency. "It is a totally different part of the spectrum from 10GHz with different characteristics and challenges and is not a replacement for any other band."

Surrendering allocations for gains in ones favourite area of the bands is both devisive and naive. I do not think that we are likely to get many concessions in HF bands where we are only secondary users by surrendering VHF or SHF bands. In fact, I am of the opinion that any such suggestion would be seized upon by other interested parties along the 'divide and conquer' principle i.e. 'get the SHF/VHF now and when the Amateurs are so divided and fighting amongst themselves, get the HF stuff as well'. This would be easy by pointing out that people who cannot even agree amongst themselves are not fit to have access their bands".

There is much more of this but interestingly, Dave includes a report from the European Microwave Newsletter recording a CW QSO between G4KGC and PA0EZ. On 24GHz, a report of 419/529 means virtually solid copy over a distance of 391Km with one station running 100 and the other 400 milliwatts.

VOICES FROM THE GRAVE

I was advised that G4XPE (Mike) passed away early this month and had not only written the obituary note for this newsletter but also posted belated commiserations. It was therefore somewhat unnerving to receive a phone call from G4XPE saying thank you for the card but that I was somewhat premature. I am consequently delighted to advise you that G4XPE is still very much with us. Hi.

UFT AWARD

I am delighted to see that the Union Francaise de Telegraphistes issues a Century type award which is available to all Licensed Amateurs (and SWL's on a heard basis) for 100 members of the UFT. CW only of course but special stickers are available for achieving the award on a single band and supplementary stickers are also available for incremental claims (in batches of 100). No QSL cards required - as with the Century, a certified copy of log entries only.

FR50.00 or 10 IRCs for the preliminary award, endorsements are free.

Send claims to:

F5LDY, Jean-Luc Marquis

Chemin des Faisses

14 le Clos Sainte Anne

F 83300 DRAGUIGNAN, France.

SOUNDS LIKE

From G0FVS: I rather liked the article CW and the RAF. How about that for a Churchill salute? Mnemonics; No it does nothing for me but these things must be started at the beginning I think. Whilst I was taking all in for the RAE, I spent a lot of time learning Morse. It was this side of Amateur Radio that appealed to me. I had a little book "What to look for in the Spring" which I still use today. I would send as fast as I could and as long as I could with a hacksaw blade hooked up to an old transistor radio that I had (more by luck than design) made to howl good enough for a sounder. The brain could not think the dots as fast as the key so S and H were causing me problems together with other letters and I started to think about it. The double and triple tonguing that I used as a bandsman proved the answer. The method is to inject air through the lips into the mouthpiece as if ejecting a piece of paper from between the lips. For double tongue, the mental though TU as in Tuc is the first ejection, the second comes from the back of the throat CU as in Cup. TUCU TU CU is much faster than TU TU TU TU and you can get the letter correct by the rhythm. For the letter I, instead of dit dit it

become tu cu (a leading tongued du with a guttural cu) and S becomes du cu du with H as du cu du cu.

Clearly, this kind of thinking has to come right at the start but once accepted it is a tremendous help.

Glad you mentioned this Jim because it is something I have been doing for yonks though without the advantage of a bandsman's background. I am an avid viewer of fifteen to one on TV and a contestant having been asked for the structure of SOS correctly replied di di di dah dah di di dit which caused the quiz master to stop and think before saying "Yes.. dot dot dot dash dash dash dot dot dot I suppose is what you meant but yes that is correct" I was inclined at the time to get on the phone in the hope of enlightening the gentleman but feared the explanation would involve too much time. Those of you thinking of starting a beginner would do well to think in these terms as well as perhaps the mnemonics mentioned last month.

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THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

Not too much this month. You have all been fairly quiet. What's wrong then, cat got yer tongue? **F6GPA**. "*being in the miraculous situation of having a few minutes to spare*" - hey that's my line Hugues - reports that "*our short sighted (not to say totally blind) France Telecom has decided to close down the CW marine service as it is of no further use*". Such a shame that we cannot all close down those things which are really of no further use like packet bulletin boards sagging under the weight of inane and pointless gripes. *Not very clever* says Hugues in reference to some stations which he has heard issuing 30+ CQs and only one Call. Frankly, I wouldn't spend the time to hang around and count and the only occasion that I would address such a station would be to tell him he is very much reducing the chances of a reply. Worse though in Hugues estimation, is the frequently lengthy conversation conducted entirely under BK responses with neither station giving his own or the other's call. "*With my available filters, the customary gang of vandals sitting on the frequency of VK0IR recently, caused me no problem but I don't understand the pleasure they get out of it. I suppose they spend the rest of their time slashing seats in trains or cutting throats when they operate*". He breaks down the cost of my beer to 18F for one litre but buys a homely red wine at 6F per litre. I am clearly living in the wrong country but Hugues, at the risk of initiating an EEC war, the red plonk does not approach a good ale for satisfaction. Hi. **GW4PXQ**. George, after working many new members on 80m claimed his 2nd Century Award before Christmas. He continues to be active but has found few new contacts though his current score of 217 will doubtless be improved. He spotted an anomaly in the listings where K8MPF was listed under two different numbers. Should have this sorted out by the time we go to print. No, Reg is 1686. 0086 is assigned to a lapsed member. You are not alone in being konfuzed by some of the new terminology mate Hi. I take a couple of computer mags and am inundated with enough new abbreviations etc., to justify a new dictionary. **GM4LOA**. Sadly, our John does little or no work on CW these days following a fourth stroke warning. Since he renews his subs however, I take it that he still has an interest in the mode or does he perhaps enjoy deciphering old Geo's obscure writings? **G0TBD**. Terry is having a fine time with the Last Sunday ladder and, judging by the activity and volume of QSL cards sent out, he is not alone and yes, I will be publishing a list of Century Award holders in the near future. **G3KEF**. Re ZS6ME. Thank you for the note

Tom. 2809 is correct and I will have words with Nancy about the doubling up. Hi. Condx on 20 have been so ropy that he spends Sunday afternoon drowning his tonsils in the pub with G3RSP but Tom worked Eric on 20m at 1600z so now that we know he is active round about that time, it is well worth keeping an ear open for the lad. **G4OHX**. Sam managed to get away to the Dominican Republic but despite much writing to various authorities, failed to get a reciprocal. He spotted an antenna which was "kaput" as was the owner's rig and English so, since his Spanish is about as good as my Martian, it was not too productive a meeting. Ah well... next time perhaps? **GW0SGG**. Bill continues the treatment on Tuesdays though it was curtailed for the SK Week. Love to hear more of you calling to GC0IPX/P. **G4VBB**. Our Graham is, like many others, striving to improve his code reading. Copying at 18wpm in the head is a smashing advantage and though I understand your conviction that you are getting nowhere fast, believe me your reading will not be static. There is no such thing as an intermediate speed barrier. There has to be an upper limit (shame about that) but although you may not be able to appreciate it, each time you grasp for a higher speed, you are actually improving. Patience Graham. T'will all come in the end so let it come painlessly. **G4IXI**. Trevor, who hitherto chided me for the notes on my 1x3 CQ routine tried it himself and expressed himself surprised at the results. Any contacts made at the time of valid membership counts for your Century. The brushed script face is fine but could it be that the claim about spelling errors being deliberate is just a cover up for the lack of spell checker? Hi.

SPECIAL EVENT STN

On the occasion of the Ulster Titanic Society's commemoration of the 85th anniversary of the Titanic's completion in Belfast in 1912. The station will be manned by members of the UTS G13MMF, G13NQH, G13XHL, G14CBG, G10PCU and G10SSA along with invited Glasgow operators GM3JTF and GM3MAS. Location:- Belfast's magnificent Waterfront Hall April 14 - 16. Call Signs:- GB0UTS and GB0MGY on 80m to 10m and 2m. Every contact will receive a special QSL overprinted with the Titanic's MGY callsign and the UTS logo. A certificate will be available at a cost of 5 IRCs (funds to UTS) from G10SSA who is QTHr in UK and International callbooks.

HELP

Anyone got a cw filter for a Collins 75s-3c. Info pse to G0KMG. Also, **Any members in the Manchester area** bent on attending the Rally at Atherton on June 1. If you would like to help out, Bob is putting on a stall. Pse contact him asap 01204-494308.

G3TUX

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FINALE

I have had to do some cutting and preening to get the info in for this month. The way things are going I may well have to increase the number of pages but we'll see how things go.

As I write this, the SK Week is in full flow and although it is not easy, I do break occasionally to work a few of the members. We are getting some very nice code coming across and, whilst as expected, a few are struggling a bit; the overall picture is of very nice easy to decipher sound.

Currently making arrangements for the Dayton trip. Flight is booked and W8BL is charged with responsibility for picking me up, feeding me, providing beer and comfort and finding me a loose rig. Hi. He'll be glad when I return to Blighty I am sure. 73/88 people. Take care and stay sober
de Geo

WX9X QSL CARD PRICE LIST AND ORDER FORM (1995)

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Other: awards, logos, ex-calls, etc: <u>Special Fists Club Card</u>		
USA on your address? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		ARRL Logo? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
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day () _____ evening () _____		

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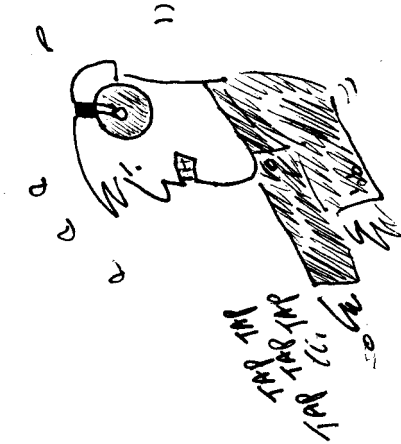
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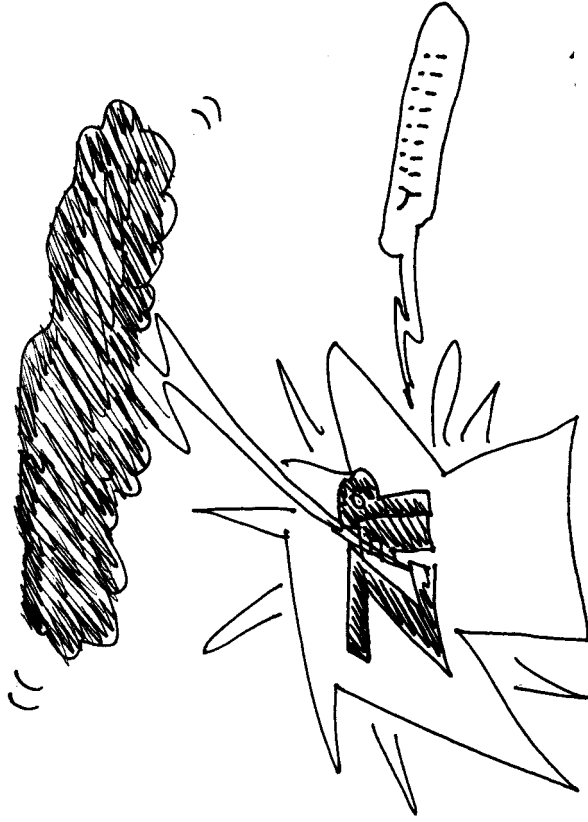
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